Yes, Sir. The Government is formulating the details of proposals designed to further streamline and simplify passport services with a view to increasing productivity and reducing delays.

भारत-अमरीका संबंध

2678. **श्री सोम पाल** : क्या विदेशमंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका में नया राष्ट्रपति चुने जाने के बाद भारत-अमरीका संबंधों को प्रगाढ़ बनाने के लिए सरकार द्वारा उठाये गये कदमों का ब्यौरा क्या है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री दिनेश सिंह) : सरकार भारत-अमरीकी संबंधों में हो रहे सुधार को बहुत उच्च प्राथमिकता देती है और नए अमरीकी प्रशासन के साथ विभिन्न स्तरों पर सम्पर्क स्थापित किए गए हैं। सरकार का प्रस्ताव है कि नए अमरीकी प्रशासन के साथ पारस्परिक कार्यकलापों को बढ़ाया जाए ताकि द्विपक्षीय संबंध, विशेष रूप से परस्पर हित चिन्ता के क्षेत्रों में, और अधिक सुदृढ़ हो सकें।

भारत-अमरीकी संबंध बहु-आयामी हैं। हालांकि अमरीका के साथ इस समय चल रही हमारी बातचीत में कई क्षेत्र शामिल हैं, लेकिन सरकार आर्थिक एवं वाणिज्यिक क्षेत्रों में मौजूद संभावनाओं को विशेष महत्व देती है।

Character Certificates required for passports

2679. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the applicants for passports are required to submit a certificate of character certified by a gazetted officer;

(b) whether it is also a fact that such certificates issued and signed by Members of Parliament are not acceptable to passport offices;

(c) if so, what is the rationnale thereof; and

(d) if not, whether Government propose to issue instructions to the regional passport offices accordingly and also publicise these for public knowledge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) No Sir. A Verification Certificate is an optional document which may be attached by any applicant if he so chooses.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Government have considered the proposal for reintroduction of the system authorising the Members of Parliament to sign Verification Certificates for applicants. During recent Debates in Parliament, there was strong opposition to the proposal from large sections of Hon'ble Members. In view of this, Government have decided that Central and State Legislators would not be authorised to sign Verification Certificates.

(d) Does not arise.

Admission to Indian students in commonwealth countries

2680. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have warned the Indian Students not to seek direct admission to the educational institutions in countries of Commonwealth of Independent States;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Government of India had issued three advisory notices in February, July and November, 1992, informing all concerned that following the dissolution of former USSR, changes